THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) and (b) The renovation of 84 rooms and attached toilets in the old block of Akbar Hotel New Delhi was completed in October, 1985. The total expenditure on this account is estimated to be Rs. 20 lakhs.

Amount written off as bad debt by Banks

1009. SHRI N. E. BALRAM:
SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large sum of money is written off as bad debt every year by the nationalised banks;

(b) if so, what was the amount written off as bad debt during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) at what level the decision in this regard is taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) to (c) The risk of certain debts going bad is inherent in the nature of operations of banks. Commercial Banks including all nationalised banks make provision every year out of their annual income for meeting their liability towards bad and doubtful debts to the satisfaction of their statutory auditors and write off the debts which are considered by their management as ultimately unrecoverable from out of the provisions so made. These amounts are written off only after all avenues of recovery are exhausted. The powers to write off bad debts generally rest with the Board of Directors of the banks. According to the forms of Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account prescribed in the Third Schedule of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, which all banks are required to follow strictly, the banks are given statutory protection from disclosing the quantum o particulars of bad and doubtful debts for which the provision is made to the satisfaction of their auditors. In accordance with the statutes governing the public sector banks and in accordance with the practices and usages customary among bankers, all the public sector banks are enjoined upon by law not to divulge information relating to the affairs of their constituents.

In view of the above position, the required information cannot be divulged.

Raw jute price

1010. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what was the price of raw jute W-5 grade at the mill gate in Calcutta during the 1st week of February,1986 and what was the price in the corresponding period last year;

(b) whether there has been any fall in the price; if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to prevent the fall in the price of raw jute?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN): (a) The market price of W-5 grade of raw jute at Calcutta during the 1st week of February 1986 was Rs. 296 per quintal as against the price of about Rs. 980 per quintal during the corresponding period of last year.

(b) and (c) There has been substantial fall in raw jute price during the current jute season 1985-86, the main reason being harvesting of a bumper crop after four successive short crops and lack of sufficient buying support from mills. With a view to checking fall in raw jute prices and to protect the interests of jute

growers, the Government has taken various steps which includes:

(1) Announcement of minimum statutory price of raw jute and mesta;

(2) Expansion of market coverage both by the Jute Corporation of India and State Co-operatives;

(3) Enlargement of storage capacity;

(4) Full manning of purchase centres through recruitment of additional hands;

(5) Sanction of credit on 'as required' basis by the Reserve Bank of India for undertaking price support operation, total credit sanctioned so far being Rs. 90 crores;

(6) Issue of directive on 6-9-85 by Jute Commissioner to all working jute mills in the private sector to build up stocks of raw jute up to specified levels so as to step up purchases of raw jute by mills;

(7) Grant of permission to Jute Corporation of India to export raw jute;

(8) Use of mass media by Jute Corporation of India to advise the farmers not to make distress sale of their produce at prices below the statutory minimum to unscrupulous traders and bring their produce to JCI/Co-operative purchase centres;

(9) Record purchase of over 27 lakh bales of raw jute by the Jute Corporation of India.

Fall in the demand for raw jute goods

1011. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that of late there has been a fall in the demand for raw jute goods in and outside the country; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN): (a) and (b) India's exports of jute goods have been coming down over the years mainly due to stiff competition from synthetic substitutes and another producing country, although, of late, the declining trend has been arrested. In so far as domestic demand for jute goods is concerned, it has increased over the years due to growing production in agriculture and industrial sectors notably of foodgrains, sugar, cement, fertilisers etc.

Funds received from non-resident Indians

1012. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what was the total funds received from Non-resident Indians during 1985;

(b) what was the amout retained in banks by way of deposits and how much has been diverted to other investment avenues;

(c) whether Government propose any further tax concessions exclusively for Non-resident Indians: and

(d) if so. what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) and (b) The details of investments made